



## US Tried to Fund Biolabs in Ukraine as Early as 2005, Records Show

### Description

UKRAINE/RUSSIA/USA: Moscow has unveiled evidence that Kiev ordered several bio laboratories, which received US funding, to destroy samples of dangerous pathogens. Russia's Defence Ministry says it has proof that these biolabs were working on biological weapons targeting certain ethnicities. Both Kiev and Washington deny it.

The US government has been dodging questions for some time about the fact that it funded biolabs in Ukraine, until Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs Victoria [Nuland admitted](#) on 8 March that Washington did provide assistance to these laboratories (but still avoided confirming accusations by Russia that Kiev developed biological weapons there). It is not clear what took the US so long – especially since it knew perfectly well about at least one such lab for more than a decade.

Thanks to the work of the US Armed Forces' Counterproliferation Centre, a [media clipping was preserved](#) from 17 June 2010, telling how then-US Senator Richard Lugar "applauded the opening of the Interim Central Reference Laboratory (ICRL) in Odessa, Ukraine".

According to the article, originally published by BioPrepWatch.com (and preserved only in web archives and the Counterproliferation Centre clippings), the facility was a level-3 bio-safety lab – meaning it was equipped to handle the most dangerous pathogens on Earth, such as anthrax and Q fever. It was specifically designed to research these pathogens, the article said citing the late senator.

"The continuing cooperation of Nunn-Lugar partners has improved safety for all people against weapons of mass destruction and potential terrorist use, in addition to advancements in the prevention of pandemics and public health consequences", Lugar said at the time.

Moreover, talks about establishing the ICRL in Ukraine date back even further – to 2005, according to an [archived Nunn-Lugar Report](#) edition from August of that year. Back then, Lugar and (at that time) fellow Senator Barack Obama were coordinating efforts with Ukrainian authorities to study and help to prevent the spread of avian flu. Coincidentally, avian flu was one of the pathogens that Kiev's laboratories were studying in the context of the potential spread of dangerous pathogens via bird migration from Ukraine to Russia, Russian Defence Ministry findings suggested.

Eventually, Ukraine signed an agreement with the US under the Nunn–Lugar Act, which sought to remove weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet states, and agreed to the construction of a modern laboratory for handling and studying dangerous pathogens on its territory.

Despite eventually admitting the presence of the US-funded bio laboratories in Ukraine, Victoria Nuland did not consider Russia's accusations about experiments on modifying dangerous pathogens and turning them into [biological weapons](#). At the same time, she said Washington was "quite concerned" with the prospect of the Russian military seizing these laboratories during their special operation on Ukrainian territory.

CIA Director William Burns claimed that Ukraine conducts no research on dangerous pathogens that could be used in biological weapons. He dismissed the Russian military's statements as "propaganda" and a possible pretext for "false flag operations". The World Health Organisation, in turn, called on Ukraine to destroy high-threat pathogens housed in its laboratories – citing the need to prevent "accidental or deliberate release".

by Tim Korso

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